



Austro-Hungarian
Orders, Medals and Decorations
Volume II: Pre-1848 Awards
Part IV, 1766-1780



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Introduction

This section will cover the awards issued from 1766 to 1780. During this time Austria was ruled by Maria Theresa as coregent with her son Joseph II. During this portion of her reign she ruled as Empress Dowager, Archduchess of Austria and Queen of Hungary. Her son Joseph II was the Holy Roman Emperor, Archduke of Austria and King of Hungary. During this period medals and decorations were issued with the image of Maria Theresa by herself and with Joseph II. Medals were also issued with the image of Joseph II. This document will only concern itself with medals that were listed to reward military accomplishments or services rendered in support of the empire that were of a military nature.





Joseph II Honor Medal (Joseph II Gnadenkmedaille)



Date Issued: 1766-1780

Reason Issued: Issued by Joseph II on the occasion of his election as the Holy Roman Emperor in 1764 and from 1766 as a reward for the outstanding merit by Austrian military commanders and other soldiers of the Austrian armed forces, which Maria Theresia had placed under his command.

Classes or Types: Three

- Large Gold Medal
- Large Silver Medal
- Silver Medal

Interesting Facts:

- This was the first medal that was issued as a true national award for merit. Prior to this award medals were issued as personal signs of recognition by the rulers of the Austrian Empire. This was an award from the nation for service to the nation. Thus all later Austro-Hungarian awards can trace their lineage to the award of these medals.
- The word Gnaden (Grace) as used in the name of this medal had a different meaning when it was issued than it does today. Thus “grace” should be interpreted as “honor” therefore the title in today’s terminology would be the Emperor Joseph II Honor Medal for Virtue and Example
- From 1765 when this decoration was established until 1790 when it was discontinued, 14 variations of the award were issued.
- The period on which this decoration was issued is from 1766-1780 when Joseph II served as Emperor and Co-Regent and 1780-1790 when he was Emperor and ruler of Austria
- This medal was issued as a wearable medal with a suspension ring and as a table medal.
- Bronze medals are copies that were made for exhibition and the collector trade

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with an attached flat round stylized suspension eye at the top.

Obverse: A youthful bust of Joseph II, facing to the viewers right. He is portrayed with long flowing hair in which is a laurel wreath near the temples. He is dressed in an armor breastplate with and an ermine mantel and wears the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece. Paralleling the rim around the upper two-thirds of the medal is the inscription: **IOSEPHVS II . D.G. ROM. REX. S.A.GERM.REX HVNG.BOH. &C. PRIN. HERED. A. A. &C.** near the lower edge of the medal is the signature of the medalist: **A. WIDEMAN**

(Anton Wideman)





Joseph II Honor Medal (Joseph II Gnadenkmedaille)



Reverse: The eye of God (a triangle with eye surrounded by a wreath of rays) overlooking a globe surrounded by clouds. Superimposed on the globe are a sword and a tiller which are crossed. Both are interwoven with boughs of oak and laurel. Along the top margin of the medal, above the eye of God is the inscription: **VIRTUTE ET EXEMPLO**. Translation: by virtue and example. The eye of god is larger on this medal than on the preceding medal, the clouds are denser and the motto is bolder.

Weight:

- Gold Medal: 84 grams or 24 Ducats (known to exist in 15 and 20 Ducat versions)
- Large Silver Medal: 54 grams
- Silver Medal: 35 grams

Size:

- Gold Medal: 50 mm in diameter
- Large Silver Medal: 50 mm in diameter
- Silver Medal: 46 mm in diameter

Type of Material: Gold and silver

Variations: E. Holzmair reports that there were 14 versions of this medal issued from 1764 to 1790

- Medal with attached eye
- Medal without eye
- Medal with steel crimp on eye
- Table medal see Pre 1766-1780 Pages 120 & 121

Designer: Anton Wideman

Manufacturer: Vienna Hauptmunzamt (Vienna Mint)

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: The gold medal could be worn on a gold chain or on a 39-40 mm scarlet red ribbon while the silver medal was always worn on a red ribbon

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known





Reward Medal for Combatant Troops Marksmen
(Belohnung Medaille für Kämpfer Truppen Schützen)



Date Issued: 1769

Reason Issued: As a reward for expert marksmen who demonstrated their skill during the visit of Maria Theresia with the troops in 1769

Classes or Types: One

Interesting Facts: None known

Hallmarks: None Known

Design: A round medal with a large flat attached oval eye at the top.

Obverse: A youthful bust of Joseph II, facing to the viewers right. He is portrayed with long flowing hair in which is a laurel wreath near the temples. He is dressed in a suit of armor and wears the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece. At the bottom of his bust is what appears to be a portion of an open cloak. Opposite him and facing to the viewers left is the bust of Maria Theresia in a gown with flowing curled hair. Parallel- ing the rim around the upper half of the medal is the inscription: **JOSEPHVS II. M. THERESIA.AUGG.** Near the lower edge of the medal is the signature of the medalist: **A. Widemann**

Reverse: A crowned Hapsburg eagle around which is inscribed: **ARCH. AUS.D. BURG. LOTH. M.D. HET. 1769.**

Weight: 26 grams

Size: 40 mm in diameter

Type of Material: Silver

Variations: None known

Designer: Anton Wideman

Manufacturer: Unknown

Number Issued: Unknown

Case: Unknown

Ribbon: A strait scarlet ribbon

Attachments: None

Miniature: None known

